

California Bay-Delta Public Advisory Committee (BDPAC)
Water Supply Subcommittee (WSS)
Thursday, May 17, 2007
9:00 a.m. to 12:00 Noon
The Bonderson Building
901 P Street, Hearing Room 102-A
Sacramento, California

Meeting Summary

Introductions

The following BDPAC members and alternates attended the meeting: Steve Hall, Jerry Meral, Greg Gartrell, Gary Bobker, Ron Jacobsma, Tom Zuckerman, Joan Maher, David Guy, Todd Manley, and Al Zepp.

The meeting focused on the following agenda items:

1. Brief overview of the Surface Storage Investigations
2. Common Assumptions Review
3. Role of the Resource Agencies in Storage
4. Presentation and discussion of the five Surface Storage projects
 - a. Shasta Lake Water Resources Investigation
 - b. North-of-the-Delta Off stream Storage (Sites)
 - c. In-Delta Storage (Delta Wetlands)
 - d. Los Vaqueros Reservoir Expansion
 - e. Upper San Joaquin River Basin Storage Investigation (Temperance Flat)
5. Public Comments
6. Prioritization Recommendation(s)
7. Water Supply Performance Measures

The meeting commenced with the Co-Chairs explaining that the purpose of the prioritization exercise was not to eliminate projects but to provide direction to the agencies on which projects should be prioritized for further funding. This prioritization request was made to the Co-chairs from the directors of the Department of Water Resources (DWR), the US Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), and CALFED in early April. At the June 6th WSS meeting, a similar exercise will take place on the conveyance projects. Then, a presentation recommending the funding prioritization of storage and conveyance projects can be made to the BDPAC at their next meeting in June. A committee member commented that prioritizing projects and making recommendations to the BDPAC such as this is unprecedented. More study is needed on most of the projects before judging and comparing their merits—performing this exercise is premature. For example, an isolated conveyance project has not been defined or studies undertaken. Furthermore, the Federal and State budgets have already been determined for the upcoming years. Clarification on the purpose of the exercise was requested of the Co-chairs.

Co-chairs responded that members of the BDPAC did not request this funding prioritization, yet DWR, Reclamation, and CALFED would like some advice from the WSS regarding which projects seem to be most appropriate for further funding. Acknowledging that the 2008-2009

Federal and 2007-2008 State budgets have already been determined, the goal of the exercise is to provide the agencies with recommendations for the next budget cycles.

Another Subcommittee member asked how budgets for surface storage projects can be recommended without a discussion of conveyance and budgets for other water supply projects. He noted that the prioritization discussion may be a useful way to foster discussion about project comparisons, but expressed reservation on providing specific recommendations to the BDPAC. Others Subcommittee members agreed.

1. Overview of the Surface Storage Investigations – Presenter: Ron Ganzfried (Reclamation)

Ron Ganzfried provided a brief overview of the surface storage investigations, including the status of documentation for the projects, potential benefits, and cost-sharing challenges. Please refer to meeting materials for a copy of the presentation.

2. Common Assumptions Review – Presenter: Sean Sou (DWR)

Sean Sou explained the objectives, evolution, and accomplishments of the common assumptions effort. Among other goals, the assumptions will provide a framework for collaborative decision-making regarding surface storage investigations. Sean explained components of the Common Model Package, the next version of which (version 9) will be ready for use by June, 2007. Please refer to meeting materials for a copy of the presentation.

3. Role of the Resource Agencies in Storage – Presenter: Dave Zezulak (Department of Fish and Game (DFG))

DFG is reviewing the progress of the surface storage projects in consultation with the US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA/NMFS), and the CALFED Ecosystem Restoration Program. They are examining each project's potential for ecosystem restoration, as well as negative impacts to wildlife. The FWS is charged with reviewing the projects under the purview of Reclamation, while DFG is responsible for those under DWR. It was pointed out that the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act requires the resources agencies to review the projects and collect pertinent information.

Comments:

A subcommittee member asked if DFG plays a role in developing ecosystem restoration benefits for the projects. DFG consults with the agencies on the project benefits. They review the projects and look for the benefits identified, as well as negative impacts but they do not determine the project.

A question was asked about DFG's responsibility to ensure Public Trust issues. Ensuring Public Trust is one of DFG's foremost responsibilities and USFWS and NOAA are responsible for ensuring these issues on Federal projects and their input is included in all environmental reports.

4. Shasta Lake Water Resources Investigation – Presenter: Katrina Chow (Bureau of Reclamation)

Work completed to date on the Shasta Lake Investigation and the six comprehensive alternatives were presented. The potential project purposes and contributions, as well as the challenges facing the Shasta Lake Investigation were also discussed. Please refer to meeting materials for a copy of the presentation.

Comments:

A question was asked to clarify the differences between alternatives CP3, CP4, and CP5. It was explained that all three involved a dam raise of 18.5 feet (CP3 is just the dam raise). Alternative CP4 includes operations to provide additional water for anadromous fish (in addition to water supply benefits). Alternative CP5 has the same water operations as CP4 and adds additional actions for lake area ecosystem restoration, improved public safety at Shasta Dam, and increased lake area recreation.

Speaker in Support:

A member of the California Farm Bureau commented that the Farm Bureau supports increased surface storage in some capacity at some locations, though at this time and until the studies are completed they do not support one project over another.

Speakers in Opposition:

Gary Mulcahy, Winnemem Wintu Tribal Government Liaison, expressed his tribe's opposition to the Shasta Lake Investigation. He asked how Reclamation will resolve challenges of the California Public Resources Code concerning the McCloud River. The impacts to the McCloud River are greater than described in the reports and the Area of Potential Effect has been defined too narrowly. A consultant for the project responded that the study will not change the code. The study team is assembling and reporting all of the relevant information, including the requirements related to the McCloud River. Mr. Mulcahy commented that Reclamation does not hold title to existing tribal lands under the reservoir because it did not comply with the law when Shasta was built in the 1940s. Any expansion would be in further violation of the law.

Michael Warburton, Public First Alliance, also expressed opposition to the Shasta Lake Investigation due to its potential cultural and social impacts. He further stated that adding storage to Shasta Lake puts the Lake at greater risk—it is not advisable to concentrate all of California's water storage in one location such as Shasta. He feels the institutional problems in the Reclamation Act (and problems with water management in California) should be addressed before progressing with this storage option.

5. North-of-the-Delta Offstream Storage Investigation – Presenter: Sean Sou (DWR)

The study status of the North-of-the-Delta Offstream Storage (NODOS) Investigation was presented covering the components of a reservoir at Sites, its potential benefits and preliminary cost estimates. Please refer to meeting materials for a copy of the presentation.

Comments:

A subcommittee member asked if the proposal calls for the filling of Sites with a conveyance pipeline from the Sacramento River. The answer was yes.

Speaker in Support:

David Guy, Northern California Water Association, expressed support for the NODOS investigation. He stated that NODOS is an important component of the larger water management portfolio in Northern California.

Speaker in Opposition:

Steve Evans, Friends of the River, expressed opposition to the NODOS investigation due to its potential impacts to the Sacramento River. He stated it is unlikely that the facility will provide benefits to the environment and that even if it could, there were no assurances that the facility would be operated in such a manner and that the water would not be exported south. He noted that CALFED water use efficiency targets have not been met, and he expressed concerns about assurances to raise the gates at Red Bluff for fish because it hasn't yet been done.

Speaker in Support:

Jeff Sutton, Tehama Colusa Canal Authority, expressed support for NODOS. He stated that there have been "good faith" investments in environmental actions such as temperature controls and fish screens on the Sacramento River. His water district believes NODOS provides needed water flexibility and benefits. Conservation alone will not solve the water shortages in dry years.

6. In-Delta Storage -- Presenter: Stephen Roberts (DWR)

Key findings and recommendations on the In-Delta Storage program, which has been on hold, were presented. DWR continues to recommend that further study be suspended until a proposal is submitted by potential participants that support re-initiating the project study. Please refer to meeting materials for a copy of the presentation.

Comments:

A subcommittee member asked if Giant Garter Snakes have been found in the studies conducted. Staff answered that habitat was found, but not Giant Garter Snakes.

Speaker in Support:

Andy Moran, The Delta Wetlands Project, spoke in support of the project and provided additional information to the subcommittee. He commented that continuing with this project is recommended as it is the most thoroughly studied and quickest to implement. Please refer to meeting materials for a copy of the presentation. A question was asked if the Biological Opinion regarding Delta smelt would still be considered valid. Andy replied that it is still valid, but the issue should probably be revisited.

Speaker in Opposition:

No one spoke in opposition.

7. Los Vaqueros Reservoir Expansion – Presenter: Stephen Cimperman (DWR)

The status of the Los Vaqueros Reservoir Expansion (LVE) project was presented. LVE is consistent with sustainable Delta options and is the only surface storage facility recommended in the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) Report. Furthermore, it has local support as the public voted in favor of further studies in March 2004. Please refer to meeting materials for a copy of the presentation.

Comments:

None

Speakers in Support:

Greg Gartrell, Contra Costa Water District, presented the benefits of the LVE. Studies have resulted in an optimization of the originally proposed expansion so that it can be most cost-effective—expanding the existing dam rather than replacing it. Please refer to meeting materials for a copy of the presentation.

Tomi Van de Brooke, California Alliance for Jobs, supported the LVE. She reiterated LVE is ready to move forward, has local support, and is the only storage option supported by the PPIC Report.

Speaker in Opposition:

No one spoke in opposition.

8. Upper San Joaquin River Basin Storage Investigation – Presenter: Patricia Roberson (Bureau of Reclamation)

The study is focusing on two options, a dam at Temperance Flat and one at Fine Gold Creek. The potential water supply, water quality, and river restoration benefits of these options were described. Please refer to meeting materials for a copy of the presentation.

Comments:

Subcommittee members asked if contributions to groundwater storage had been investigated and if the existing hydroelectric diversion tunnels could be shortened to preserve some of the power potential lost from the project. DWR has developed an initial report on groundwater storage which should be integrated into these studies. Staff will look into adjusting the length of the diversion tunnels to save hydropower losses from the project.

A question was asked regarding potential water exchanges with Southern California and members of the Friant Water Authority. Staff commented that those details have not been determined yet.

Speaker in Support:

Ron Jacobsma, Friant Water Authority, voiced support for the project. Due to the San Joaquin River Restoration settlement, the Authority will lose a significant amount of water previously available to its customers. Temperance Flat could replace about half of the loss.

They have examined conjunctive use options; however, groundwater recharge opportunities can only be realized with the flexibility provided by a new reservoir. There will be flood control and power generation benefits, as well.

Speaker in Opposition:

Steve Evans, Friends of the River, expressed opposition to the project. He commented that the multi-billion dollar facility with questionable environmental benefits should not be supported. If there are benefits to users, the users should pay for it. The direct environmental impacts to Temperance Flat will be severe. Trails and Native American tribal sites will be flooded. It will likely result in a net power loss (as would Sites), as a source of clean energy would be lost. River water is not needed for restoration downstream, and it should not be stored behind dams.

9. Public Comments

Peter McGaw, Contra Costa Council, commented that surface storage is a critical element of the water puzzle. He suggested that LVE should move forward because it was furthest along in the studies, had local support, was mentioned in the PPIC report and was the only project to have passed a federal economics review. He suggested recommending that all projects be funded so that the appropriate studies can be completed.

10. BDPAC Discussion on Prioritization Recommendation(s)

Greg Gartrell commented on the email sent around by Steve Johnson regarding the carbon balance issue and how reservoirs potentially contribute to green house gasses and climate change. Greg stated that the press release from the International River Network Steve cited was not relevant for California reservoirs. The study cited in the press release actually described how tropical reservoirs produced methane that could be an alternative source of energy in addition to hydropower. Greg agreed that further analysis is needed on all projects to accurately assess the greenhouse gases produced and carbon balance of their operations.

Steve Hall commented that despite budget recommendations moving forward and additional studies being needed, perfect knowledge is rarely available and the agencies need advice to focus. He also suggested that the Subcommittee might ultimately decide to push for funding to complete all project studies before any prioritization is made.

Gary Bobker asked what advice the agencies need if the budgets have already been slated. The State is only funding some, while the Federal government is funding the others. What is left to be determined?

Ron Jacobsma agreed, stating that there is no State activity supporting Shasta or In-Delta, while Temperance Flat, Los Vaqueros, and Sites all have their champions who are able to secure further funding as needed.

Stephen Roberts clarified the differences between funding in Prop 84 versus Prop 50. He stated both Federal and State funding is needed for all projects.

Tom Zuckerman asked that groundwater storage be considered when evaluating the water supply dilemma. Integrated solutions are needed, involving conjunctive use and groundwater recharge.

Ron Jacobsma responded that they have been looking at groundwater recharge with Upper San Joaquin and if there are conjunctive use options, they will be integrated.

Gary Bobker commented that the group has not been looking at the storage as an integrated system. He reiterated that he was reluctant to rank the options if they were to become recommendations to the BDPAC.

Greg Gartrell commented that they should strive to complete the studies with what funding has been granted from the various entities. Then a comparison can be made about the impacts, benefits, costs, and connections to groundwater recharge, etc.

Gary Bobker agreed and stated that the agencies should provide clearer direction on what advice they need. The WSS can then discuss and recommend the options and alternatives. He stated that Shasta appears to potentially have a fatal flaw (challenges to the State laws with issues concerning the McCloud River).

The WSS agreed to table the prioritization exercise. It also agreed to consider what can be done to usefully discuss conveyance at their June 6th meeting.

11. Performance Measures – Presenter: Ken Kirby (Kirby Consulting Group)

Ken Kirby gave a presentation on the development of performance measures for the Water Supply Program of CALFED. He said CALFED is committed to a balanced set of actions that contribute to meeting all Program objectives, thus the CALFED agencies have begun to develop performance measures. He provided a handout for discussion purposes that detailed strategic objectives, performance objectives, indicators, and targets. Please refer to meeting materials for copies of the handout.

Comments:

A subcommittee member suggested not just looking at the minimal (compliance with the law) for Delta standards. Include targets from the ERP program—we should be measuring enhancement, and try to measure end-user supply reliability.

Another subcommittee member suggested looking at Urban Water Management Plans for performance targets in urban areas.

A third subcommittee member noted that CALFED's performance should be measured by whether the program is anticipating problems and taking actions to address them.

Public Comments:

A member of the Public commented that in the five years that have passed, the health of the Delta has declined so rapidly that the Biological Opinion for common assumptions is flawed. New biological opinions aren't due until when all surface storage studies are expected to be

completed. This is troublesome. He encouraged the WSS to examine storage on a broader level including groundwater storage used conjunctively with surface storage.

The meeting adjourned at 12:30 pm.